

Inspection of a good school: The Redway School

Farmborough, Netherfield, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK6 4HG

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 June 2023

Outcome

The Redway School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending this happy and caring school. They feel safe and secure. This is because pupils form warm and trusting relationships with staff. The day gets off to a cheerful start with a fun session where pupils greet their friends in class.

Well-established daily routines create a safe and predictable environment for pupils. This helps them to engage well with their learning in class. Everyone in school shares the same high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Staff know how to give just the right level of support to enable pupils to make the right choices for themselves.

Teaching staff work collaboratively with therapists. Therapy programmes are threaded through pupils' timetables and are integral to their success. Staff seamlessly incorporate this provision into learning activities. If complex health needs mean that pupils are unable to attend school for long periods, they receive personalised support from skilled staff. This helps pupils to continue with their education and retain a strong sense of belonging to the school community.

Leaders are ambitious and determined to ensure every pupil should benefit from a rich, broad learning experience. Their focused actions are evident in the significant work that has taken place to revise the curriculum.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The new curriculum has been designed to meet the needs of every pupil from the early years through to sixth form. Leaders are relentlessly focused on this work. They have identified the important knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn in most subjects. They are continuing this work to establish a consistent standard across all subjects for all pupils. This curriculum is carefully adapted to meet the needs of pupils across the three pathways of learning. Targets from pupils' education, health and care plans (EHC plans) are also woven into their daily learning.

Leaders have devised new processes to check how well pupils are learning the revised

curriculum. This is not yet fully implemented, and leaders know that this is a priority so that they can more clearly understand and analyse the progress that pupils are making.

Pupils' communication development is at the heart of all learning. In the early years, adults expertly teach pupils to express themselves. Because adults know the children incredibly well, they can identify pupils' preferences and harness this to help them to learn. Pupils are provided with highly motivating learning activities where adults facilitate opportunities to learn to communicate 'more' and to practise making clear choices. Across the school, all pupils engage well with their learning. Many staff are experts at helping pupils to regulate and be ready to learn.

Books can be found everywhere. Pupils enjoy taking a calm moment to read in the library area. Staff use sensory approaches adding props, sounds and experiences to help all pupils enjoy storytelling. Leaders are in the process of putting in place a newly devised programme to help pupils at the earliest stages of learning to read. They learn to attend to and notice the difference between sounds through fun activities. Over time, they become familiar with the sounds of letters. Staff recognise this is beneficial to all pupils for their communication development and to those pupils who may be able to learn to read. Leaders also know that this programme will help identify the pupils who may benefit from more formal phonics lessons. However, not all pupils have had the opportunity to learn through this new programme. Leaders have identified that fully embedding this systematic and well-sequenced approach to reading is a priority.

All staff focus on helping pupils get ready for their next steps when they leave the school. This includes opportunities to take part in enterprise projects where they learn about the world of work. Older pupils often join the 'transitions department' during key stage 4. Here they complete courses which help them to develop useful life skills. Some are taught in a separate building as appropriate to their needs. Leaders have thoughtfully given this a distinct college-style atmosphere. This helps pupils gently get used to how a further education setting might feel while remaining closely connected with school.

Pupils are provided with a range of opportunities to promote their wider development. Their achievements are celebrated in assemblies. Pupils enthusiastically recall the recent 'healthy living' week. Memorable aspects of this include a visit from a dance company and a local trip to play ten-pin bowling. One pupil was particularly keen to recount his adventures on the climbing trip. He was proud of his achievement, climbing high while being kept safe by the ropes. This exemplifies the 'wow' moments pupils have as part of their school experience.

Most staff really like working at the school. Some reflect that workload has been high because the new curriculum is still in development. Governance has also been through a period of change. The rigorous systems and processes, which are now implemented, are enabling governors to bring the appropriate challenge and support to school leaders' actions as improvements are made to the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know children and their families exceptionally well. Leaders organise helpful regular training and updates. This means staff are well informed and able to keep pupils safe. There are established systems and processes for reporting concerns. All staff work together as a team, and this results in a well-organised and thorough approach to safeguarding. As appropriate, leaders refer to external agencies to swiftly secure support for any families who need it. Governors also check the effectiveness of the school's procedures.

Through the curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not yet fully embedded the newly devised system to identify the small steps of progress that pupils should make across the newly designed curriculum. This means that leaders and teachers do not yet have all of the information they need to decide the most important next steps for pupils. Leaders need to ensure that the new processes are securely embedded so that they can monitor the impact of the curriculum.
- Leaders have devised a programme to teach the foundational skills required for those at the earliest stages of learning to read. This programme is not yet implemented across the whole school. This means that not all pupils are learning important early reading skills. Leaders need to continue this work to establish this approach across all phases of the school, including the older pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2018.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View

when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	110592
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10269061
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	170
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	20
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Neil Griffiths
Headteacher	Ruth Sylvester
Website	https://theredway.net
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2018

Information about this school

- The Redway School provides education for pupils who have autism, multisensory impairment, severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties. Some pupils also have complex medical and health conditions. All pupils have an EHC plan.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the deputy headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders,

teachers and support staff. The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair, and a representative from the local authority. They were not able to meet with the headteacher as she was absent.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and computing. These deep dives included discussions with curriculum leaders and teachers, lesson visits with leaders, talking to or observing pupils and looking at their work/evidence of their learning. The lead inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- Inspectors looked at curriculum planning in a range of subjects, pupils' work and a range of documentation, including for individual pupils. This included EHC plans and individual pupil targets.
- Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and outside during social times.
- Inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and policies, speaking to staff and discussing this with pupils.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including school improvement documents and governance minutes.

Inspection team

Jo Petch, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Parker

His Majesty's Inspector

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